

FROM THE DEN

Vol. 28, No. 1
February/March 2006

St. Charles, Illinois

Strength Through Community

Donald P. DeWitte, Mayor

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City Web Site:
www.stcharlesil.gov

Community
Web Site:
www.st-charles.il.us

Pay Your City



Utility Bills Online

The City of St. Charles Utility Billing office is proud to announce that utility customers can now pay their City utility bills online using a bank account. Customers can also receive a monthly email notification when the new utility bill is available for viewing online. For either

service, just log on to www.stcharlesil.gov, click on the light bulb on the right side of the home page, and follow the prompts to sign up. Please call the City of St. Charles Utility Billing office at (630) 377-4426 with questions about these new services or other utility billing related questions.

Join Us at City Hall!

Being part of a close-knit community means staying involved and taking advantage of the opportunities and programs available. St. Charles has so much to offer--following are some ways citizens can join us at City Hall.

Safety Town

Registration for the 2006 Safety Town program will be March 18, 9-11 a.m., at the St. Charles Police Department. A parent or legal guardian may personally register his or her child, age 5 or 6. Proof of residency in the school or fire protection district, along with a waiver, is required at enrollment. The class schedule is available at www.stcharlesil.gov/departments/police/programs/ or contact Ofcr. Jeff Finley at (630) 443-3730/jfinley@stcharlesil.gov.

Summer Employment at the City

Summer clerical and non-clerical positions are available for students. Non-clerical positions work outside (Ex. painting, mowing, blacktopping, mixing concrete, shoveling dirt) and start at 6-7 a.m. Starting pay is \$8/hour. Applicants must be 18, enrolled in school full-time for fall, have a valid driver's license, and pass a drug screen and background check. Summer employees may start May 8, 22 or June 5 and are expected to work until Aug. 5 (with 5 or fewer missed days).

Apply online at www.stcharlesil.gov/jobs/, in person, or send/fax/e-mail your resume by Mar. 24 to Human Resources, City of St. Charles, 2 E. Main, St. Charles, IL 60174; Fax - 377-4901; email - hr@stcharlesil.gov. The City is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Call (630) 377-4446 with questions.

Citizen Police Academy

What is FATS training? Ever wonder how the police handle hostage negotiations? Join the Citizen Police Academy to find out these things and more! The class meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays, Mar. 7-Apr. 27, 7 to 9 p.m., beginning March 7, at the Police Dept. training room. Applications are subject to approval and are available at the Police Department (630-377-4435) or download the form at www.stcharlesil.gov/departments/police/programs. Classes are also open to high school juniors and seniors, subject to approval from the high school liaison officer. For information, contact Ofcr. Jeff Finley, (630) 443-3730/jfinley@stcharlesil.gov.



Yardwaste
Collection
Resumes
March 1, 2006

Ode to Trees

Trees touch our lives in many ways. They let us know that the long winter will soon give way to warmer days when we see the first hint of green on their branches. In summer, they provide shade on those long, hot summer days we dreamt about all winter. In fall, they give us spectacular shows of color. In winter, they give us another kind of beauty--the delicate silhouettes of their bare branches after a fresh snow.

Let's try to remember the simple beauty trees provide year round and show our appreciation by watering them during drought, protecting them from those who would do harm for sport, and showing them the respect owed to all living things.

Brush & Spring Cleanup

Spring is coming soon, and with it the annual Residential Brush Collection and Spring Cleanup curbside programs. Details will be in the April/May issue of this newsletter, but for those who wish to plan ahead, save these dates:

Brush Collection is offered to residents within the corporate limits (township residents are not included in this program). The first pickup on the east side of the river is April 3; the first pickup on the west side is April 10. Please place branches (3 ft. long) on the parkway, facing the same direction, by 7 a.m. on the designated day. Stumps are collected separately.

Spring Cleanup curbside collection will begin with the northeast quadrant (north of Rte. 64, east of the river) on April 24. The northwest quadrant will be collected May 3. The southwest quadrant will be collected May 1, and the southeast quadrant will be collected April 26. The City is no longer able to drop off trucks.

Sewer Problems

If you experience problems with your sewer, call the Public Works office at (630) 377-4405 (after hours 443-3681) before calling a plumber. Sewer Division personnel will respond to assess the situation. If there is a problem with the sewer main, we will address the issue promptly. Problems internal to the home or in the service line to the home are the responsibility of the homeowner.

Recycling Reminders

Following is a list of items that can be mixed in the orange recycling bins: aluminum/steel/tin cans, aluminum foil/tins, aerosol/paint cans (empty), glass bottles/jars (all colors), plastic containers (#1-5 & 7), plastic six-pack rings, and coated paper cartons (milk/juice).

Newspapers should be placed in a paper grocery bag and left on top or next to the recycling bin. Mixed papers (phone books, magazines, catalogs, chipboard boxes, envelopes) should be placed in a

separate paper grocery bag. Cardboard should be flattened and cut to 36" x 36".

Call the Public Works office at (630) 377-4405 or Onyx at (630) 587-8282 for more details on the City's refuse and recycling program.

Vial of Life

The St. Charles Fire Department will provide a specially marked prescription bottle to be placed in the refrigerator. The bottle holds a form with important details for emergency medical personnel regarding medications, physicians, and emergency contacts. A bright orange magnet for the outside of the refrigerator is also provided and will alert emergency personnel of participation. Call (630) 377-4457 to participate in this free program.



Many gardeners have already begun planning for spring plantings--flowers, vegetables and trees. Following are some helpful hints for selecting and planting new trees.

First, define the purposes for the tree, such as to provide summer shade or a winter windbreak, prevent soil erosion, improve privacy, reduce noise, or add value.

Next, evaluate the amount of water, space, air, sunlight, and soil. Make sure the location you have chosen will meet the tree's requirements. Placement is important, so consider the height, crown, spread and root space.

Look up for utility wires and down for utility easements (check your plat of survey). Trees planted under utility wires should not exceed 15-25 feet at maturity.

Finally, time the planting for early spring or late fall. Generally, evergreens should be planted in spring and deciduous trees in late fall. This can vary, so check with a tree specialist for the best time of year to plant a particular species or contact the University of Illinois Extension Kane County Unit at (630) 584-6166 for help. Enjoy your trees and think spring!

Severe Weather

Every year, Illinois can expect an average of 31 tornadoes, as well as severe thunderstorms, winds, and floods. To protect you and your family in the event of a weather emergency, follow these precautions:



During a tornado, a basement is the safest place to seek shelter. If there is no basement, go to an interior room or hallway without windows on the lowest level.



Lightning from severe thunderstorms causes more deaths than tornadoes. Seek shelter immediately if you are outdoors during a storm. Avoid taking showers or using electrical appliances until the storm is over.



Flooding is the number one cause of weather-related death. In the event of a flood, listen to the radio for utility and evacuation instructions. If evacuation is advised, do so immediately.

For more emergency information, visit the Fire Department web site at www.stcharlesil.gov/departments/fire/ or the Illinois Emergency Management Agency site at www.state.il.us/iema/.

Solicitor Caution

City personnel are occasionally contacted by residents regarding solicitors who present information that may be confusing for consumers. Here are some helpful tips to better inform our citizens:

- The City does not partner with private organizations, companies, or charities to solicit for products, services or donations.
- The City's policies and the Illinois State Statutes do not allow for the endorsement of consumer products or services.
- Occasionally, suspects may pose as a City employee or utility workers. All City employees carry a photo ID. When in doubt, ask to see the City ID, which will display a photo of the employee, City logo, and employee's signature.
- The St. Charles Police Department asks

door-to-door solicitors to register before soliciting within the city limits. Anyone with questions or concerns regarding solicitors can contact department personnel by calling the non-emergency telephone number (630) 377-4435. To report fraud or provide information about suspicious situations, immediately call 911 to dispatch officers to the scene.

Disaster Preparedness

The City's Emergency Management Agency has been very active, creating an Emergency Preparedness Plan, conducting exercises, and working with Kane County. The Kane County Office of Emergency Management, in partnership with the Kane County Health Department and the American Red Cross, is registering people who need special assistance in an emergency. Pre-identifying those with special needs will help them plan to serve these residents better during an emergency or disaster.

March 7, 2006 Statewide Tornado Drill

Sirens will sound for 3-5 minutes.
This is a great time for schools and businesses to practice!

Forms are available online at www.kcoem.org or call the Kane County Office of Emergency Management (630-232-5985), Kane County Health Department (630-232-3801) or Fox River Chapter of the American Red Cross (630-443-8844). The City's web site also contains information on emergency preparedness and links to these important forms: www.stcharlesil.gov/departments/Fire/EP/overview.html.

Plumber Tips

There are many choices of plumbers, but how do you know which one to call when you have a problem? It is a good idea to get price quotes from more than one plumber so you can compare rates. Ask the plumber if his work is guaranteed and for how long. Let the plumber know if you have any large trees over your sanitary service line and any history of backups. If you have a long sanitary sewer service line (100' or more), ask the plumber if his equipment will adequately rod the distance of the sanitary sewer service lines (especially if tree roots may be involved). The plumber must rod from the house to the sanitary sewer main to effectively clean the service line.



24-Hour Parking Reminder

Please note that the City code prohibits vehicles to remain parked over 24 hours on any city street or in any public parking lot. Vehicles left for an extended period of time will be considered abandoned, towed, and impounded. Owners will be responsible for all towing and storage fees (up to \$500). Please contact the St. Charles Police Department at (630) 377-4435 with questions about parking regulations.

Blowin' in the Wind

Warm spring breezes blow trash and recycling into neighboring yards, ponds, and streets. Please keep trash contained on collection day.



City References

City Hall

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Utility Billing and Building & Zoning

Office Hours:

Monday
8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Tuesday - Friday
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

St. Charles Municipal Center
2 E. Main Street, St. Charles, IL 60174
(630) 377-4400

Billing - Electric/Water/Sewer

Turn Ons & Turn Offs377-4426
Building & Zoning377-4406
City Admin./Clerk377-4422
Electric Division377-4407

Electric/Water/Sewer Emergency

after 5 p.m. and weekends443-3681

Emergency 911
Engineering377-4486
Emergency Management Agency377-4416
Flood Prot. Assist. and Map Eng.377-4486
Finance/Accounting762-7002
Fire Administration377-4458
Fire Prevention Bureau377-4457
Human Resources377-4446
Mayor Donald P. DeWitte377-4444
City Newsletter377-4917
Police Admin./Invest./Crime Prev.....377-4435
Public Works-Water/Sewer/Street.....377-4405
Community Development377-4443
Economic Development443-4093
Refuse Pickup Info. (Onyx)587-8282
TDD 800-526-0844

Community Numbers

Animal Control232-3555
Chamber of Commerce584-8384
Heritage Center584-6967
Visitors Bureau.....377-6161
Downtown St. Charles Partnership513-5386

MEETING SCHEDULE

Meeting	February	March
CITY COUNCIL	6 & 21	6 & 20
PLAN COMMISSION review & hold public hearings for rezoning, special use & new developments	7 & 21	7 & 21
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT zoning, annexation, boundary lines, downtown, comprehensive plan, code enforcement	13	13
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS** budget, personnel, insurance, economic development, administration	6 & 21	6 & 20
GOVERNMENT SERVICES utilities, city property, streets, sidewalks, sewers, water, parking lots, stormwater	27	27
HISTORIC PRESERVATION review facade impr. & bldg. permits for exterior work within historic dist.	1 & 15	1 & 15
TREE COMMISSION manage city owned trees (trimming, Tree City USA, disease & pestilence, etc.)	8	8
YOUTH COMMISSION* direct services & grants to support the welfare of the City's youth	6	6
CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION aesthetic improvements to City's main corridors	2	2

All meetings start at 7 p.m. unless noted:

**Starts at 6 p.m.*

*** Starts at 7:05 p.m. or immediately after the City Council meeting.*

Please call the Mayor's Office at (630) 377-4445 to confirm a meeting. Agendas are available at the City reception desk, 2 E. Main St., and online at www.stcharlesil.gov/meetings.



What's on your mind?

Your advice, suggestions and questions are valued and encouraged by the Mayor and City Council. To assure a response, please include your name and address below. Mail to: City Administrator's Office, 2 E. Main St., St. Charles, IL 60174, or email to: CAO@stcharlesil.gov.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

This issue of
From the Den
was delivered
by Door to Door
Direct. Please call
(630) 377-4917
with questions,
comments, or if
your delivery was
not satisfactory.